

REMARKS

Initially, in the Office Action dated November 5, 2003, the Examiner rejects claims 1, 5, 23 and 25-29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,236,938 (Kojima et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No 5,835,094 (Ermel et al.). Claims 24 and 30-33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kojima and Ermel et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,201,540 (Gallup et al.).

By the present response, Applicants have amended claims 1, 25 and 30 to further clarify the invention. Claims 1, 5 and 23-33 remain pending in the present application.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

Claims 1, 5, 23 and 25-29 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kojima et al. in view of Ermel et al. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Kojima et al. has been discussed in Applicants' previously filed response. Ermel et al. discloses displaying information about computer files to a user on a display in an environment simulating three-dimensional space including displaying a category of files as a container having a size related to its distance from a predefined portion of the display.

Regarding claims 1 and 25, Applicants submit that neither Kojima et al. nor Ermel et al., taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of each of these claims of, inter alia,

providing a plurality of contents display zones and a menu board used to select any contents in a virtual three-dimensional space to display a part thereof on a screen, changing the contents information items to have sizes on the screen determined according to a utilization degree of a user, changing the contents information items to be displayed with sizes thereof sequentially minimized toward a deeper place in a direction of depth on the screen, or a menu board being displayed together with part of the plurality of contents display zones when the user operates to display the menu board with a menu key. Kojima et al. merely discloses a media selecting device enabling a user to select any one of a plurality of selectable media using a rotary disc-type knob. As has been noted in Applicants' previous response, Kojima et al. does not disclose or suggest anything related to providing a plurality of contents display zones and a menu board used to select any contents, as recited in the claims of the present application. Further, Kojima et al. does not disclose or suggest anything related to changing the contents information items to have sizes on a screen determined in accordance with the utilization degree of a user or to be displayed with sizes sequentially minimized toward a deeper place in a direction of depth on the screen. Kojima et al. merely relates to the selection of hierarchically-related icons. Kojima et al. does not disclose or suggest anything related to changing the sizes of contents information items, as recited in the claims of the present application. Further, Kojima et al. does not disclose or suggest a menu board being displayed together with part of a plurality of contents display zones when the user operates to display the menu board with the menu key. Kojima et al.

merely discloses access images changed from display screens (see, e.g., Figs. 5B and 6B and Figs. 5A and 6A).

The Examiner asserts that Kojima et al. discloses multimedia information display method for displaying contents of a plurality of multimedia in the abstract and col. 2, lines 53-58. However, these portions of Kojima et al. merely disclose that the invention relates to a media selection using icons representing respective media. This is not displaying contents of a plurality of multimedia, as recited in the claims of the present application. The icons disclosed in Kojima et al. merely allow a selection of a media type. These portions of Kojima et al. do not disclose or suggest displaying the contents of a plurality of multimedia, as recited in the claims of the present application. Further, the Examiner asserts that Kojima et al. discloses providing a plurality of contents display zones and a menu display board used to select any contents in a virtual three-dimensional space to display a part on a screen, with the book icons, Fig. 3, genre, Fig. 4, media content, Fig. 3B, the abstract, col. 2, lines 59-64, col. 5, lines 14-19 and col. 16, lines 17-67. However, these portions of Kojima et al. merely disclose an illustrative of an image in the virtual reality space presented by the media selecting device, the selection of a media by selecting a corresponding one of icons disposed in a three dimensional space on a display screen by turning a rotary disk type knob, and a description of Fig. 2, which is a conceptual illustration of a virtual reality space created on a display screen by a media selecting device according to Kojima et al. This is not providing a plurality of contents display zones and a menu board used to select any contents in

a virtual three-dimensional space to display a part of the virtual three-dimensional space on a screen, as recited in the claims of the present application. These portions of Kojima et al. do not disclose or suggest contents display zones, or a menu board, or a plurality of contents display zones and a menu board used to select any contents in a virtual three-dimensional space to display a part of the virtual three-dimensional space on a screen. These portions of Kojima et al. merely disclose details of the icon selection using a rotary knob concept as disclosed in Kojima et al.

Further, the Examiner fails to specifically point out any portion of any of the references that discloses or suggests arranging contents information items corresponding to a plurality of contents selected for respective contents display zones, as recited in the claims of the present application. The Examiner admits that Kojima et al. does not disclose or suggest changing the contents information items to have sizes on a screen determined according to a utilization degree of a user, but asserts that this limitation in the claims of the present application is disclosed in Ermel et al. at the abstract, col. 1, lines 49-58, col. 2, lines 8-13, and col. 5, lines 4 and 5. However, these portions of Ermel et al. merely disclose that an icon of a file belonging to a category of files can be displayed on a region of a container where the size can increase with distance from a predefined portion of the display (e.g., top, bottom, imaginary horizontal line, etc.), and that a larger container can exchange position and size with a smaller container in response to the user selecting one of the containers, and that a shelf is provided for a user to place a number of frequently

used application or document icons. This is not changing the contents information items to have sizes on a screen determined according to a utilization degree of a user. These portions of Ermel et al. merely disclose that the category of files can be displayed as a container having a size related to its distance from a predefined portion of the display. These portions of Ermel et al. do not disclose or suggest sizes on the screen being determined according to a utilization degree of a user, as recited in the claims of the present application.

The Examiner admits that Kojima et al. does not disclose or suggest displaying detailed items of contents but asserts that Ermel et al. discloses these limitations in the claims of the present application at col. 3, lines 61-65, col. 4, lines 14-19. However, these portions of Ermel et al. merely disclose that each container can be labeled by a category that can be changed through conventional selection, deletion and overriding techniques and that each document, application and stack icon can be similarly labeled, and that all contents of a container shrink appropriately when their container shrinks. This is not displaying in the screen detailed items of contents regarding a contents information item selected by the user together with part of a plurality of contents display zones, as recited in the claims of the present application. The changing of a category label or the fact that all contents of a container shrink appropriately when their container shrinks does not disclose or suggest these limitations in the claims of the present application. These portions of Ermel et al. do not disclose or suggest anything related to a contents information

item selected by a user together with part of a plurality of contents display zones, as recited in the claims of the present application.

Moreover, the Examiner admits that Kojima et al. does not disclose or suggest a menu that is displayed together with a plurality of contents display zones but asserts that Ermel et al. discloses these limitations at the tool tray 24, col. 3, lines 25-31 and col. 4, lines 30-38 and Figs. 1-9. However, these portions of Ermel et al. merely disclose that a tool tray is a fixed area of the environment that remains with the user as folders and files are brought to and away from the user and provides a stable point of reference that remains with the user as the user interacts with the 3D environment. The tool tray can include tools helpful for the user in manipulating documents and applications. This is not a menu board or a detailed items of contents being displayed together with part of a plurality of contents display zones within a part of a three-dimensional space when the user operates to display the menu board or the detailed items of contents with a menu key, as recited in the claims of the present application. These portions of Ermel et al. merely disclose that as folders and files are manipulated and moved and brought to and away from the user, the tool tray remains allowing the user to manipulate documents and applications. These portions of Ermel et al. do not disclose or suggest anything related to a menu board or detailed items of contents being displayed together, or contents display zones within a part of a three-dimensional space, as recited in the claims of the present application.

Regarding claims 5, 23 and 26-29, Applicants submit that these claims are dependent on one of independent claims 1 and 25 and, therefore, are patentable at least for the same reasons noted regarding these independent claims. For example, Applicants submit that none of the cited references disclose or suggest assigning a variable representing a utilization degree to each of the information items according to history of use of the information items of a plurality of media by the user in the past, or changing an information display method according to the variable.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that neither Kojima et al. nor Ermel et al., taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of each of claims 1, 5, 23 and 25-29 of the present application. Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

Claims 24 and 30-33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kojima et al., Ermel et al. in view of Gallup et al. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Regarding claim 30, Applicants submit that none of the cited references, taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of this claim of, inter alia, providing a plurality of contents display zones and a menu board used to select any contents in a virtual three-dimensional space to display a part thereof on a screen, changing the contents information items to have sizes on the screen determined according to a utilization degree of a user, changing the contents information items to be displayed with sizes

thereof sequentially minimized toward a deeper place in a direction of depth on the screen, or a menu board being displayed together with part of the plurality of contents display zones when the user operates to display the menu board with a menu key. As noted previously, none of the cited references disclose or suggest these limitations in the claims of the present application.

Regarding claims 24 and 31-33, Applicants submit that these claims are dependent on one of independent claims 1 and 30 and, therefore, are patentable at least for the same reasons noted regarding these independent claims. For example, Applicants submit that none of the cited references disclose or suggest displaying content items having a higher utilization degree of the user on a nearer side of the user.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that none of the cited references, taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of each of claims 24 and 30-33 of the present application. Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 1, 5 and 23-33 are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of such claims is respectfully requested.

U.S. Application No. 09/463,010

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (referencing attorney docket no. 500.38106X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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